THE

EXPERIENCED CHRISTIAN's

MAGAZINE:

CONSISITNG CHIEFLY OF

ORIGINAL NARRATIONS,

SHEWING THE INCREASE OF

Christ's Kingdom

IN AMERICA;

CONTRASTED WITH THE SAD EFFECTS OF INFIDELITY.

WILLIAM PHŒBUS, *Editor.*

——————To rear the tender thought,
To teach the young idea how to shoot;
To pour the fresh instruction o'er the mind;
To breathe the enliv'ning ſpirit, and to fix
The generous purpoſe in the glowing breast.

What age in miracles so much abounded?
Where'er did God so bright his power diſplay?
O wilt thou still have eyes and yet not ſee!
Ungrateful people! still shall mighty wonders
Strike strong thine ear, yet not affect thy heart?

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THE

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For MAY, 1805.

OF THE SOUL OF MAN.

THE soul is of vast worth in respect of its capacity of understanding: for certainly to understand is the greatest operation that a being is capable of; for it is this that gives beauty and excellency to all our operations, whether they be natural or moral: 'Tis this that proposeth the end, directs the course, and prescribes the measures of all other actions: For if we had ever so much strength, and had no understanding to guide it, it would be of no use to us. Blind power acts at random. If we had the force of a whirlwind, and had no mind to stear and manage it, it would be all chance whether we did well or ill with it. So that unless there were some understanding either within or without us, to conduct our powers, and determine them to our good, we should be as well off all together without them; because while they act by chance, it is at least an equal chance whether they will injure or advantage us.

Since therefore understanding is the rule and measure of all our powers, it necessarily follows, that it is the greatest and noblest of them all.

What an excellent being then must a soul be, in which this sovereign power resides? A power, that can collect unto itself such prodigious numbers of simple apprehensions, and by comparing one with the other, can connect them

into true proportions, and upon each of these, can run long and curious discants of discourses, till it hath drawn out all their consequences into a chain of wise and coherant notions; and sorted these into such various systems of useful arts and sciences; that can discern the inharmonious contexture of truths with truths—the secret link of coherent notions—trace up effects to their causes, and sift the remotest consequences to their natural principles—can cast abroad its sharp-sighted thoughts over the whole extent of beings; and, like the sun with his outstretched rays, reach the remotest object—can, in the twinkling of an eye, expatiate through all the universe; can keep correspondence with two worlds; can prick out the path of the stars, span the whole surface of the earth, and dive into its capacious bowels, and there discover the numerous offsprings with which it is constantly teaming. Then can sail into the world of spirits by the never varying compass of divine revelation, and survey those invisible regions of happiness and misery, which are altogether out of our sight while standing on this shore—in a word, can ascend from cause to cause, to God, who is the cause of all. What an excellent being then is the soul of man, which is endowed with such a vast capacity of understanding.

Doubtless if human souls had no other capacity to value themselves by, this were enough to render them the most glorious part of this world! But it hath other excellencies, it has moral perfections, which are proper to it in this state of conjunction with the body: it is capable of being raised to the perfection of those angelical natures which do most approach and resemble its Creator, the Fountain of all perfection. By being weaned from the pleasures of the body, it may by degrees be educated and trained up to lead the life and relish the joys of immortal spirits, it may be contemporated to an incorporeal so as to enjoy itself without the body, and live as angels do, upon love, wisdom, holiness, and heavenly contemplation. Though it cannot be expected that a soul should come to such a pitch here; yet even here it may be growing and aspiring to it.

(To be continued.)

THE EXPERIENCE AND DEATH OF A FRENCHMAN.

JOHN LA NIE was taken from St. Peter Mickleton in old France, by the Duke of York's army, and brought prisoner to Halifax, in Nova-Scotia, where he would have entered as soldier in the fort, if the terms of enlisting had not been such as required him to renounce his religion; but rather than do that, he submitted to be put on board of the West-India fleet, then in New-York, harbour. But he said he always dreaded to die, knowing he was not fit for eternity. By some means he made his escape from the ship, and got on Long-Island, where he kept hid till the ship sailed.

After which he worked on a farm for a German. Some time after he had been in that family a certain minister called to see the German, and spent a few hours with him. When he was about to leave the house, the old gentleman put a book in his hand, desiring him to pray with the family, but John withdrew and went to the field before prayer began. In the evening, he asked the farmer what he gave that man a book for; he told him to pray. John asked him, if there were more religions than one? and what religion that man was of? The farmer told him it was St. Paul's religion. John desired to know what Paul's religion was? He told him that it was to be converts by God's power.

He then said he had believed ever since he could remember, that God had a people in some part of the world or other, to whom he did make himself known. He determined to go with the German to meeting next time he went, to see if God's power was there.

The first prayer was made, though he could understand but very little, he said he felt as if a deep grave was ready to recive him, and he ready to fall into it: when he tried to stand up, he felt as if he should sink under a burden of sin; he told them as well he could, that God's power was upon him; he defired them to pray for him; they did, and even while they were praying, the Lord shewed him his mercy by filling him with joy and peace in Jesus Christ. Now he knew what Paul's religion

was, and lived according to it for seven years. He was a poor honest man, sold apples and straw through the streets of New-York, for to support his wife with two orphan children. Last Spring he got a great cold, which settled on his lungs, and proved his death. He lingered all last summer, sometimes carrying his basket through the street, when he ought to have been in bed; yet all cheerfulness, paying every little debt he owed, till fall came on, when he took his bed in a damp cellar in Second-street. This became the place where the "good man met his fate," with all the firmness of a man of God. To make his end more awful, his only child, about nine months old, fell sick: it proved to be a dropsy in the head; she lay in fits and stupor for fifteen days and nights within three feet of his bed-side; but with a smile of resignation he gave her up to die: she died some time before him, but he never said it hard.

He now began to be fearful he should live so long as to wear out the patience of his benefactors, for he had nothing to support himself with. He said he had better be sent to the poor-house. But the good people let him know he would not tire them. Some sent him a dollar, some a crown; some one thing, and some another: and it was worth more to an observer to behold how every little present increased his gratitude to his great Creator, than the gift could be to him in his poverty.

His dissolution was expected from day to day for three or four weeks. During that time young men of respectability and candour came to the cellar, hoping to be present at his death. At length he told them, three days more and the messenger will come for me, at the same time observing, that his long suffering had taught him the vast evil of sin, and that if his affliction was so sore amidst good friends while Christ supported him, what would it have been if according to his sin!

I stepped in to see him, and found him in a very sound sleep, though breathing hard. I stood behind him, and thought what he would say when he waked up, which he soon did, and with a sigh said, O my Lord, for a little more of de patience of de saints. He looked at his nails, his wife said she would wash his hand—Never mind, said he, de worm will have them soon. His mouth and throat

were now so sore that he could with difficulty speak; still his eyes were looking upward, in his broken manner praising Jesus, and saying, Come Lord and receive my spirit. When the young gentlemen came to see him and watch with him, he looked on them with a smile, and lifted up one finger, signifying that in one day he should be with Christ in paradise. They stood by him till he fell asleep as on the bosom of Jesus, and the young men carried his body with pleasure to the grave, in about the 30th year of his age.

A SHORT ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE AND DEATH OF J. J. LATE OF NEW-YORK.

HE was a stout, robust man, of a good constitution. For twelve years past he was drunk as often as his strength and money, or credit would admit. When sober he was sad, either from the sickening fumes of the spirits, or from the want of money to get intoxicated again. He seemed to take no thought of what was to come, but the present was all he cared for.

His sabbaths were spent in either swearing, drinking and sotting, or sleep: his week day in tending mason, &c. to procure more rum. I often spoke to him on the occasion as I attended him in some of his ill turns, and he laboured for me at times. The last time I saw him alive was alone in the Bowery. I told him he had not lost one of his hands nor eyes yet, which was a mercy, and if he had he could do without one hand or one eye; but he had but one soul, and if he lost that he had no more to lose; and that he was in a way to lose that. But he made light of it, as he always had done. He went his way, and I mine. About two weeks after that he had another drunken spell; he raved most of Saturday night, and all Sunday morning, cursing and swearing at his family till about eleven o'clock he lay down and fell asleep: the family was afraid to wake him, because he was so abuseful they thought to let him sleep till he should wake himself. But he woke up while dinner was on the table, fell to swearing again, and sat down to eat. Taking the

first mouthful his jaw fell, and the wheels of life all stood still They sent for me about 40 rods. When I came, his life had evaporated, and nothing was there but dead matter. Long looked for come at last: and if a speedy alteration doth not take place, many men and women too will fall a victim to brandy or spirits before next May, and in hell have to repent for suicide.

MISS KETURA BUNCE'S LETTER, LATE OF LONG-ISLAND.

My very dear friend,

I HAVE retired this evening to converse with you by writing, as I am deprived of an interview. I well know it rejoiceth you to hear of the prosperity of Christ's kingdom. I have this good news to communicate to you; blessed be God, such a time as I never saw before! experienced Christians rejoicing in the Lord, and praising Him in the Highest. I have thought when I have heard them speak of the great thing God had done for them, they could enjoy but little more while in this world. This is extraordinary. But O my dear friend, how much more so is this, that I, who have been crying out in the darkest despair that ever I heard or read of any one being in, that was delivered out of it. Even when I saw you last at Smith-Town, though I had then got so that I could refrain from crying out in the bitterness of my soul, and from telling every one I was entirely cast off, yet then I was without hope, and in an awful situation, from which I never expected relief. After long reasoning and debating with myself, I verily thought I was condemned by the word of God and my own conscience. Then O then the unhappy moment came that I gave up all and sunk into dark despair! What sorrow seized my poor soul! Sins that I long thought had been forgiven then awoke, and came to my mind. I stood amazed and affrighted even at my wits end! Every word that ever I spoke in behalf of religion flew in my face. The sacrament that you administered to me solemnly about two years before,

O what a time I had on account of that saying to myself, What made me when I had no experience of grace, approach to that most sacred ordinance? Why was I so heaven-daring? Thus was I tortured with every duty that I had the most solemnly attended to. HE who knoweth all things, only knoweth how I was to keep with my reason, which I perfectly had, amidst such powerful temptations. Some time after I heard you preach at Mr. Wheeler's, I found my hope reviving, but it was so small and faint that I thought it like the spider's web. My doubts still kept me miserable until last sacrament day. Venturing once more to touch the hem of Christ's garment by commemorating his death, my soul was again brought out of darkness into his marvellous light. I once more enjoyed a happy day, such as I have not seen in two years. By this I was convinced that I had taken the wrong spirit for the right. Because God was pleased to meet me in the ordinance that I was so fearful had been the cause of all my trouble and distress. After this my doubts returned but with less force.

But in the revival we have had, I have been much profited, hearing men, women, and children speak boldly for Christ, and tell what he had done for them. I felt my leanness, and great dejection of spirit. I felt unwilling to leave the house till I could speak and testify more of the goodness of God. I asked two young women if they would tarry a few moments with me. I requested them to pray for me: they did, and after they had both prayed, one asked me to pray. This I was unwilling to do, but seeing the great necessity of it, I made my feeble attempt, and, glory be to God, though feeble, my soul was visited in so powerful a manner that I was constrained to cry out in extacy, this is the love of Jesus, and I have often enjoyed it in this house in years past. I have been wrong in casting away my confidence so long. I had but one request more to make of my blessed Lord, and that was that I might never doubt his love again, for I had found him once more precious to my poor troubled mind. I could then give glory to God in loud acclamations of joy.

O bless the Lord with me, for since that happy moment I have had sweet streams of consolation gladdening

my spirit. May I be kept humble amidst such great favours, and truly thankful for such a deliverance. I myself am amazed and astonished at such a wondrous condescension of the Most High, in thus visiting such an abject worm, and exalting me to the privileges of his own dear children, here is love and compassion beyond degree. "God is love indeed." I must call on you my dear friends, Mr. and Mrs. Phœbus, to join with me in returning thanks to Almighty God, for my great deliverance. What shall we render to God for all his benefits towards us? When we consider on these things, are we not lost in wonder, love and praise? I once thought the labour you had bestowed upon me was all lost and vain: yea, worse than vain, that it would one day prove my condemnation: but I never thought you would lose your reward. But glory be to God, the very face of nature seems changed, and a glorious prospect lies before me, hope in me day after day is fresh and blooming. The prize appears in view to my faith's glory. Glory be to God, now I think I shall gain the victory over death and the grave, amidst outward affliction shall feel Christ within my soul.

I hear, Sir, you are about to set off on a journey. May the God of Jacob make your way prosperous, for I verily believe you ought to go and plant other churches, and leave them for others to water, and our God will give the increase. Behold for your encouragement these churches, which you have planted in our parts, how Zion hath had her walls built up, which was so broken down! What shall we say to these things. Let us join and give glory to God for his wonderful works among the children of men. I must conclude by subscribing myself,

Your unworthy but most affectionate friend,

K. B.

P. S. When I looked over my last lines, and saw I had attempted to encourage you, it made me think of a child that has been stumbling and falling, sees its parent walk erect before him, but pleased that it can begin to walk a little, calls on the parent to support himself on the child's hand, for he can walk well now: poor child, not knowing how little support it would be

to one much stronger than itself. I ask pardon for this folly. Good night.

Miss Bunce lived about three years after the date of her letter; and having passed some severe spells of sickness, which she bore with the firmness of a Christian, she died in New-York without one doubt of her acceptance with God, and in the full assurance of faith. She was always a pattern of sobriety, being greatly afflicted in body from her youth. She died in the thirtieth year of her age.

A SHORT ACCOUNT OF JONAH HINE, IN HIS LAST SICKNESS AND DEATH.

Who departed this life January 25th, 1805, in New-Haven, State of Connecticut, aged forty-two years. By the Rev. William Thatcher.

HIS sickness, which appeared to be a consumption or inflammation on the liver, began the August preceding his death; from which time he seemed to have but little expectation of recovery. During these days of affliction he manifested undaunted courage grounded on an uninterrupted peace and solid happiness in communion with God. His peace and joy appeared to increase with the approaching prospects of death. His lamb-like patience during extreme suffering, and his overflowing joy, fully corresponded with that pure doctrine which he ever preached, and that exemplary life which gained him an unsullied reputation in the minds of all those who were acquainted with him. While reflecting on his past life, he would exclaim, All my past performances appear like a mere cobweb, as to any dependence on them for hope of salvation! Nothing but the merits of the blessed Jesus can sustain my hope and save my soul." He would again say, "Had I taught any other doctrine than that I have taught, what severe reflections would now torment my soul! But now I realise more than ever the excellency of that pure gospel that I have taught to others, through

which I now rejoice in my Saviour, and my faith grows stronger and stronger."

January 20, (Sunday) a Christian friend came in and prayed with him; after which, in conversation with him, he began to expatiate on the sweetness of the following lines:

O glorious hope of perfect love,
It lifts me up to things above;
It bears on eagle's wings;
It gives my ravish'd soul a taste,
And makes me for some moments feast,
With Jesus Priest and King.

About 9 o'clock he had a fainting fit, and was laid on the bed; those present thought he was dying, but he revived again. About 10 o'clock a Christian woman was sitting by him, and observing something expressive in his countenance, as if desirous to speak, she asked him if he had any thing to say. He replied, "No, only my turn is to go first, Glory be to God! hold out, that you may shout the victory! I hope I shall welcome you to glory. My faith is stronger and stronger. Cast all your care on the Lord, for he careth for you. Throw yourself upon the Lord as you throw your wearied body on your bed for rest. Cast your bread upon the waters, after many days you shall receive it."

He then called his son, (a child about twelve years of age) to his bed-side, and said to him, "Be a good boy, I am going to leave you. God will be your Father. Take his Bible for your guide, and walk by the rules of the Gospel. Be faithful to God and to your master." (He had just been put to live with a Christian man.) His two daughters being younger then came to him. He then added, that what he had said to his son was his advice to them.

In the evening many of the neighbours came in, and one of them asked after his welfare. His answer was, "I am very weak, and wish I had strength to speak. I wish all the world knew what I feel."

Monday 26th, in the forenoon he tried to sing that hymn that begins thus:

When I can read my title clear,
To mansions in the skies, &c.

But his voice failed. To the pious widow D. he had just before said, " Sister, I am going to heaven to sing a few songs before you come there. Trust in Christ." In the afternoon the Rev. N. Eemery called to see him, to whom he said, " My confidence is strong, I have now the openings of those glorious meetings." Here his voice failed.

Tuesday evening he said, " I wish the time was come that my mortal pain was done away." To a Mrs. D. he said, " The Lord bless you and me, so that we may again meet at the right hand of God, and reign forever." To one who was seeking the Lord, he said, " Sister, farewell my dear, seek the Lord and never turn back, and God will bless you."

Thursday noon his wife said to him, " Be not discouraged, hold out to the end." The twelve o'clock bell then began to ring, which took his attention, as if he thought it was for a funeral. One informed him that it was ringing for twelve o'clock; to which he replied, " No later? how long the time is! I long to be gone!" In the evening one told him that some of his neighbours had gone to meeting; he replied, " I may be at the new Jerusalem before they get there!" He again said, " I long for the thread of life to be cut."

At a time observing his wife's affliction, he said, " My dear, I wish you would not grieve so much. Cast your care on the Lord, and he will provide for you and my children."

Mr. J. came to see him, to whom he said, " I am happy, glory to God." To Mrs. J. as she bade him farewell, he replied, " Glory, glory, glory to God."

On Friday 25th, the day of his death, one asked him if his faith was strong. He replied, " O yes, yes!" She again said, " Is your confidence strong? He smiled and again said, " O yes, yes!" She then said, " In a few hours you will be at rest." He answered, " I am afraid not so soon!"—But about half an hour past twelve he triumphantly left the world.

ADVICE TO MEN OF SIXTY, WITHOUT CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE.

THINK it not strange, that one who has seen fewer days than you, should undertake to admonish you in this way. Let not that be a reason to despise this work. But consider candidly the great necessity of such admonitions!

First, The utility of it will appear from the number of aged people, that are spared in our land through that goodness and long suffering of God, that is to lead man to repentance.

Secondly, it will appear from that general want of piety among that venerable class of people.

Thirdly, it will appear from a want of their being more frequently addressed pointedly.

I hope this advice may be accepted of all aged people, and approved by the Supreme Ruler of the universe.

It has been said, that it was hard to find one, who had neglected religion, till they were past the meridian of life to become truly religious. Perhaps this has prevented many from attempting such a work. But the apostle Paul has said, Intreat the aged men as fathers, and the aged women as mothers. I am encouraged to the attempt by some former success in a small way. It is the happy privilege of some to be admonished by parents, who knew the Lord Jesus before them, like Timothy, who had his faith increased by his mother Eunice.

I never had that to boast of from parents; the reverse was mine. I had to say to my father, Know the Lord: to my mother, Repent and be converted; and to my sponsors, Renounce the devil and all his works. And to Christ be all the glory. Hard as the task was, and difficult as it did appear, success crowned my endeavour, though weak, to the joy and consolation of them, and to my unspeakable comfort.

If you have wealth to dispose of, your children or those who expect to have the using of it, think it high time for you to make your will, fearing that sickness or old age will deprive you of your reason before that is done.—

They prognosticate from your furrowed cheeks, your aching limbs, and feeble bending frame; that your stay is short, very short in this world, and so short is the time allotted you to make your calling and election sure.

Venerable reader, no harsh expression shall pall your ear, but such as is strictly needful, yea, such only as have been given solemnly, and taken kindly from a son to an aged father.

The first thing I would call your attention to, is the extent of man's life, where they are even blessed with the best constitution, and that constitution well taken care of. Secondly, the design of your Creator sparing you so long with your reason and gospel opportunity. Is it to do as the silk-worm, weave his web and die? No, it is that you may be happy eternally, or miserable for ever, without excuse.

How many times has there been a revival of religion since you can remember—Pause—

How many times have you been moved by an unknown power to break all attachments to forbidden objects, and look to become a subject of Christ's kingdom and grace! Cannot you number them? you will soon, or God will number them for you, and make you to see the awful sum.

Therefore read patiently over and over what is here selected, I humbly beseech you, both with respect to the honour of God, your duty to the world, and the welfare of our own soul, seriously consider in what state you stand; and weigh yourself in a Christian balance, taking for your counterpoise the judgments of God. Take heed in time that the word TEKEL written against Belshazzar be not verified in you, in the hour of death and day of judgment. "You have been poised in the scales, and found of too light weight."

Remember you are now in the weighing, and the days of your pilgrimage well nigh expired, and that it behoveth you to look toward your everlasting home. Your force languisheth, your senses are impaired, your body droops, and on every side the ruinous cottage of your feeble faint flesh threateneth to fall. Having so many harbingers of death to notify you of your end, how can you neglect to prepare for so dreadful a stranger? The young may die

quickly, but the old cannot live long. The young man's life by accident may be abridged; but the old man's by no restorative can be longer adjourned; and therefore if green years should think of the grave, the thoughts of dry should continually dwell on the same.

The prerogative of infancy, is innocence; of childhood, reverence; of manhood, maturity; and of old age, wisdom.

The properties of wisdom are, to be mindful of things past, careful for things present, and provident for things to come.

Use now the talents committed to you to the benefit of your own soul, and be studious of being wise in well-doing, and faithful in the foresight of harm.

You are not able to serve the world, and though you were able, yet have you little cause to be willing, seeing that it ever gave you but an unhappy welcome, a hurtful entertainment, and now is about to abandon you with an unfortunate farewell.

You have long sowed in a field of rocks, which brought you nothing but a crop of cares and afflictions, rewarding your labour with remorse, affording for your gain eternal danger.

It is now more than seasonable time to alter the course of so unthriving a husbandry, and to enter into the field of Christ's Church, in which, sowing the seed of repentant sorrow, and watering them with the tears of humble contrition, you may hereafter reap a more beneficial harvest, and gather the fruits of eternal comfort.

Remember, I pray you, your spring is spent, your summer over and past, you are now arrived at the fall of the leaf, yea, and winter colours have long since stained your hoary head.

Think on these words of one of the fathers: "Be not careless, though our loving Lord bear long with offenders: for the longer he stay, not finding amendment, the severer he will scourge when he comes to judgment: and his patience in so long forbearing is only to lend us respite to repent, and not in any wise to enlarge us leisure to sin."

He who is so tossed with a variety of storms, and cannot come to his desired port, is much perplexed: so

he who hath passed many years, and purchased little profit, hath a long being, but a short life. For life is more to be measured by well-doing than by number of years; seeing that most men, by many days, do but procure many deaths, and others, in a short space, attain to the life of infinite ages. What is the body without the soul, but a corrupt carcase? and the soul without God, but a sink of sin and misery?

If Jesus is the way, the life, and the truth, he that goeth without him is certainly astray, and he who leaveth him is sure to die for ever; and he who is not taught by him is fundamentally wrong.

Saint Augustine saith, "God is our true and chief life, from whom to revolt is to fall, to whom to return is to rise, and in whom to stay is to stand sure.

It is he, from whom to depart is to die; to repair to him is to live eternally.

Be not then of the number of those who begin not to live till they are near dying. When after they are deserted by wicked pleasure, and are weakened down in entertaining God's enemies, think to have from HIM the entertainment of a friend.

Some there be who think to snatch heaven in one moment, which the best can scarcely attain a qualification for in many years, and when they have glutted themselves with worldly delights, would fain jump from Dives' table to Lazarus's crown; from the service of Satan to the solace of saints.

But be you well assured, God is not so poor for friends as to hold himself and his kingdom saleable for the refuge of their lives, who have sacrificed the principle part thereof in entertaining his enemies, (the devil and their own brutish lusts,) who only cease to offend him when the ability of offending is taken from them.

True it is that a thief was saved on the cross, and mercy may be found at the last gasp; but it was a saying of one of the pious fathers, though it be possible, yet is it scarce credible, that he in death should find favour, whose life deserved death; and that the repentance should be acceptable, that more for fear of hell and love of self than for love of God and hatred of sin, crieth for mercy." Wherefore, dear reader, make no longer delay; but as

you are near the breaking down of your mortal house, take time before eternity, to pacify God's just anger against you.

Though you have suffered the bud to be blasted; though you have suffered the fruits to perish and the leaves to dry up; yea, though you have let the boughs wither, and the body of your tree decay; yet look for life to the root, or the whole tree will become fuel for hell fire. For be assured, as the tree falleth there it will lie, whether toward the south or the north, to heaven or to hell; and such sap as it hath in it, such fruit will it ever bear.

Death hath already robbed you of the better part of your natural strength, and left you now to the lees and trouble of weary and dying days.

The remainder thereof as it cannot be long, doth warn you speedily to redeem your former losses; for what is age but the harbinger of dissolution? and what is the voice of your present weakness but the cry of the watchman to alarm you of the approach of death? You have been long embarked in your final voyage, and are not far from the stint and period of your course.

Be not therefore unprovided of such appurtenances as are necessary for so perplexing a journey. Death itself is very fearful, but much more terrible in respect of the judgment it summoneth unto.

If you were now laid upon your dying bed, burthened with the heavy load of your former trespasses, and gored with the sting of a festered conscience; if you felt the cramp of death contracting your diaphragm, and ready to make the rueful divorce between your body and soul; if you were panting for breath, and bathed in cold clammy sweat, wearied with struggling against your deadly pangs, and saw your physician of sad countenance on his medicine failing to restore nature, and his skill utterly baffled; O what would you give for one hour's repentance? at what rate would you value one day's contrition? Then worlds would be worthless with you, in respect of a little respite. A short time would seem more precious than the treasure of an empire. Nothing would be so much esteemed as a little longer time to fit you for your pas-

sage, which by days, months and years, is lavished away on very trifles.

Oh how deep would it wound your woful heart, when looking back on your former life, you consider many heinous and horrible offences committed against God by you; and the numberless opportunities you have had to have done good but omitted it, and yet a stranger to repentance. Often have you promised God your services, but not performed your vows.

Oh how inconsolable would your case be, your friends fled, your senses affrighted, your thoughts amazed, your memory decayed, and your whole soul astonished, not one part able to perform what it should, except your guilty conscience, pestered with sin, that would continually upbraid you with grievous and bitter accusations.

Oh what would you think then being about to be stripped of your clay tenement, and turned out of the service and standing of this wicked world, forced to enter into rough and strange paths, with unknown and frightful company, to be convened before a most severe JUDGE, carrying with you your own indictment, written so plain as to be perfectly understood by you and all others. All your misdeeds when and where committed. Then to behold HIM prepared to give sentence upon you, the very one to be your umpire who by your many offences you have made your enemy, when not only the devil, but even the angels would plead against you, and your own self be your own most sharp impeacher.

Oh what would you do in these dreadful extremities, when you saw the ghastly dragon, and the huge gulf of hell breaking out with most fearful flames, when you heard the weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth, the rage of hellish monsters, the horror of the place, the terror of the company, and the eternity of those torments?

Would you then think them wise, who delay in so weighty a matter, and idly play away the time allotted them to prevent these intolerable calamities?

Would you count it safe to nurse in your own bosoms such serpents as sins, and to foster in your own soul so many malicious accusers as horrible crimes unrepented of and unforgiven will prove?

Would you not think seventy years too little to repent

in for so many and so great iniquities, each one of which are sufficient to throw you into these unspeakable and intolerable torments?

And why then, alas, do you not devote that small remnant of time and surplusage of these your latter days, to free your soul and conscience from that corruption which by your folly hath crept upon you?

Those very eyes that behold and read these admonitions, those very ears that hear them, and that very understanding that considereth and conceiveth it, shall be cited as certain witnesses of these rehearsed things. In your own body shall you experience these deadly agonies, in your own soul shall you feelingly find these terrible fears; yea, your present state is in danger of the deepest harms, if you are not soon taken into the fold and family of God's faithful servants.

What have you gotten by being long a customer to the world, but deceitful treasure, suitable to the shop of such merchants, whose traffic is toil, whose wealth is trash, and whose gain is misery?

What interest have you reaped, that might equal your neglect of that salvation to which you have been called?

Or what have you found in this vale of tears, that was answerable to the favour of God, which you have neglected for it?

You cannot now be deluded with the passion of youth, which rashly choseth things forbidden and painful, and maketh no difference between counterfeit and current: for these are now worn out of force, and by the ravages of time are fallen into contempt by trial of their folly.

Oh let not the crazy cowardice of flesh and blood, hinder the resolution of an intelligent mind, who by wisdom cannot but discern, how much more cause there is, and how much more it must be to serve God than this wicked world. But if it be the ungrounded presumption of the mercy of God, and the hope of his assistance at the last pang, (which indeed is the common scheme of the devil to divert sinners from repentance,) alas! that is too palpable a delusion to mislead persons of health and sound judgment, who would rely upon such hopes as these, when they consider the slipperiness of time, and the running stream of our uncertain life? Who, but one of a dis-

tempered brain would offer fraud to the decypherer of all thought, with whom dissemble we may to our own eternal ruin, but to deceive HIM is impossible?

Shall we esteem it cunning to rob the time from him and bestow it on his enemies, him who keepeth account of the least moment, and will examine in the end how every moment has been employed? It is a sad kind of policy, in any person to fight against God till his weapons are blunted, his forces consumed, his limbs impotent, and the best time spent; and when fallen with faintness, and have fought against God till almost dead, to presume on his mercy.

Oh no, no, the wounds of his most sacred body, so often pierced and caused to bleed by your sins, and every part and particle of your body so wretchedly abused, will be then as so many whetstones, and incentives to edge and exasperate His most just revenge against you. You would think it a strange piece of art, while a ship was sound, the captain well, the sailors strong, and the gale favourable, the sea smooth, and all things ready to go the voyage, to lie idle in the harbour, during so favourable a season; and when worms had pierced her bottom and sides, so that she could scarce be kept above water, the captain sick, the mariners faint, the storm boisterous, and the sea making tremendous surges, then to weigh anchor, hoist sail, and set out for a far country!

Yet such is the skill of these to-morrow repenters, who, though in the soundness of their health, and perfect use of their reason, cannot resolve to cut the cable and weigh the anchor that withholds them from coming to Christ.

Nevertheless they please themselves with a conceit, that when they are astonished with the approach of death, when terror distracts them, when the understanding is darkened, and body and soul racked and tormented with the throbs and pains of mortal sickness,—then they will begin to think of the weighty matters of another world, and become suddenly saints, when they are scarce able to behave themselves like reasonable creatures. No, no, if the common law will not allow one whose judgment is decayed to make any will or testament of his temporal substance, how can it be that he that is emaciated with the inward distemper of an unsettled conscience, wrecked,

wringing with the fits of his dying flesh, maimed in all his ability, and circled on every side with many and strong incumbrances, how should he be thought to have discretion sufficient to dispose of his chiefest jewel, which is his soul? and to dispatch the whole management of eternity, and to gain the whole treasure of heaven in so short and confused a spurt.

No, no, they that will loiter in seed-time, and begin to sow when others reap; they that will riot out their health, and begin to cast their accounts when they are scarce able to speak; they that will slumber out the day, and enter upon their journey when the light doth fail them, let them blame their own folly, if they die in debt and be eternal beggars, and fall headlong into the lap of endless perdition.

Listen, O listen to St. Cyprian's lesson: "Let," said he, "the grievousness of our sore be the measure of our sorrow; let a deep wound have a deep and diligent cure; let no man's contrition be less than his crime."

The more effectually to penetrate your minds with the importance of this advice, I would call your attention to the manner in which many of the aged have been and are hurried from this world! Here is a field for you to explore, from the man who has worn a crown to the maid in the kitchen. King George the first was struck with death in his coach, and on a journey to see his friends! What a transition! from a king to a corps! from a palace to a grave! from a judge to a prisoner at the impartial bar of God! as we may say in the twinkling of an eye.

A poor old man in Maryland, paddling his canoe and talking with his daughter on the marriage of his neighbour, faltered in his speech, dropped his paddle, fell forward, and was dead without a single struggle.

A woman, after adjusting her apparel at her bed-side as she had done for a great number of years, going to bed with usual health, and usual prayerlessness, fell asleep to wake no more till the resurrection of the dead. And indeed we generally observe that old people die with very little warning by sickness: to such it must be all important to be always ready.

If by this time you are ready to say, What must I do to be saved? forsake all your besetments, which are God's

enemies. If by long habit you are become fond of intoxication, put away your strong drink, that lulls thousands to utter destruction. Despair of mercy so long as you are under the power of that evil. If gold or wealth has been your god, disengage your affection from it, or despair of heaven! If passion has been your ruling evil, mortify, annihilate this, or it will for ever torment you in hell.

If a slothful pleasantry has helped you to pass your hours away in gay unprofitableness, learn to say with Sir Walter Raleigh, "God was solemn when he made man; Christ was solemn when he lived and died for man; the Holy Spirit solemn in warning of man; and the devil engaged in plotting man's destruction:—how can man be trifling?"

Now seek retirement, seek a place to weep, seek a true penitential heart; then ask pardon, ask it again and again, ask it till you know it is granted, till you can say with one of the governors of Connecticut a short time before his death, "God has granted me a sense of his mercy and love;" till you know that God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you your sins; till you have the wedding garment; till you have the witness of his Spirit to comfort you. Then may you say with old Simeon, Now let thy servant depart in peace, for my faith hath seen thy salvation.

A HYMN,

Sung in a particular Prayer Meeting in New-York, in time of the first Yellow Fever, 1795, *when between thirty and forty died in a day.*

AH! what shall I do, or how be secure?
If justice pursue, what heart can endure?
When God speaks in thunder, and makes himself known,
The heart breaks in sunder, though harder than stone.

With sorrow I read my sins heavy score,
Their number exceed the sand on the shore,
Guilt makes me unable to stand or to flee.
So Cain murder'd Abel, and trembled like me.

The case is too plain, I have had my own choice,
Again and again I have slighted his voice.
His warning neglected, his patience abus'd,
His gospel rejected, his mercy refus'd.

And must I then go, for ever to dwell
In misery and woe, with devils in hell?
O! where is the Saviour I scorn'd in times past,
His word in my favour would save me at last.

Lord Jesus, on thee I venture to call!
Have mercy on me, the vilest of all!
For whom didst thou languish and bleed on the tree?
O pity my anguish, and say 'twas for me.

A case such as mine, will honour thy power,
All hell will repine, all Heaven adore.
If in condemnation strict justice takes place,
It shines in salvation more glorious through grace.

THE SIN AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST.

As many have been most grievously tempted to suppose that they have committed that sin, and thereby brought to despair of mercy, when under awakenings of grace; and as I myself was almost destroyed by it, at the age of eighteen, so that in the evening I was ready to wish it was morning, and in the morning to wish it was evening, being continually harrassed by that temptation till life itself was a burthen. I read the vague account of it by some authors, which only darkened counsel by words without knowledge. But I find from the scripture and some of the best divines, that to hate truth because it opposeth our sensuality, is a sin that every man in the world has been in some measure guilty of: yet some have said this is that sin. Others have made it gradually to differ from other sins; some have placed it in acts incompatible with the human soul.

But the meaning of the Scripture, if we view the context with deliberation, seems to be this, as if Christ had said, While you believed not the testimony of the pro-

phets, there was hope: the testimony of John the Baptist might have convinced you; and though you rejected that, yet you might have been convinced by my own doctrine: yea, though you did not believe my doctrine, yet there was hope; you might have been convinced by my miracles, (John xv. 22, 24:) Butwhen you accuse them to be the works of Beelzebub, and ascribe the work of the Divine Power, or Holy Spirit, tothe prince of devils, what more hope? I will after my ascension, send the Holy Ghost upon my disciples, that they may work miracles to convince the world, that they who believe no other testimony, may yet, through this, believe! But if you sin against the Holy Ghost, (that is, if they will not believe for all these miracles, for the scripture frequently calleth faith by the name of obedience, and unbelief by the name of sin,) there is no other more convincing testimony left, and so their sin (of unbelief) is incurable, and consequently unpardonable. Therefore he that speaketh against the son of man, (that is, denieth his testimony of himself) it shall be forgiven him, if he yet believe by the testimony of the Spirit. But they who continue unbelievers, notwithstanding this, and so reproach the testimony that should convince them, as you do, shall never be forgiven, because they never can perform the terms of forgiveness but by the gift of the Holy Ghost, there being no more dispensation to be granted them in this world, in the world to come.

THE STATE OF DEPARTED SOULS BEFORE THE RESURRECTION.

THERE are some of late among us, who think that the soul in a separate state is either nothing, or at least incapable of happiness or misery. Truly this is an uncomfortable doctrine to the experienced Christian, to think of being deprived of Christ's presence till the resurrection; and somewhat comfortable to the wicked, to think of tarrying out of hell so long. But I am in great hopes that this doctrine is false, yea, very confident from the scripture that it is so.

The words of Paul, Cor. v. and viii. are so plain that no tolerable interpretation can be given them but what proves, that joy is for the righteous as soon as they close their eyes to this world. "Therefore we are confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord, &c. We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord." What can be spoken more plainly?

So plain is that in Phil. i. 23—"For I am in a straight betwixt two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better." Had not Paul expected to enjoy Christ till the resurrection, why should he have been in a straight, or desire to depart? Should he be with Christ the sooner by departing? Nay, should he not have been unwilling to depart from a consideration of being deprived of the comforts of Christ's word and grace, by his soul being in a state of insensibility for at least two thousand years.

But Christ said to the thief, "This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.

Plain also is that in Rev. xiv. 13. If the blessedness there spoken of were only in being dormant in the grave, a beast or a stone were as blessed.

We could not pronounce them blessed who die in the Lord, while life would be best for them; for would it not be a great blessing to enjoy fellowship with the saints, the comfort of the Spirit, and Christ in all things? To be employed in the work of God, and in the edification of his people, is a delightful task. Who could wish to be done with all this for the torpid state? Who would wish to be gone but upon the belief that he should be soon better off? "Even to come to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to the innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly of the church of the first born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect."

Enoch, and Elias, were taken up to heaven, and shall we think they possess that glory alone? No; Peter, and James, and John, saw Moses also on the mount; and the rich man saw Abraham in heaven, and himself he confessed was in a state very different from the torpid kind.

If the wicked do, and have long since suffered eternal

fire, Jude, (7th verse,) no doubt but the godly enjoy eternal blessedness. Believe, therefore, stedfastly, O experienced Christians, notwithstanding all that deceivers may say, your souls shall no sooner leave their prison of flesh, but angels will be their convoy, Christ will be their company, with all the spirits of the just; heaven will be their residence, and God will be their happiness. And you may boldly and believingly say when you die, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit, and commend it as Christ did, into a Father's hands.

ANECDOTE.

SOME time after the commeneement of the age of reason, a gentleman on Long-Island was making too free with the old book called the Bible, and brought forward his strong argument against it; declaring in the face of all present, "I am seventy years of age, and have never seen such a place as a hell, after all that has been said about it." His little grandson, of about seven years of age, who was all the while listening to the conversation, asked him, "Grandaddy, have you ever been dead yet." There the conversation ended, at least for that time.

MEDITATIONS

By which an experienced Christian has found comfort in time of reproach and slander from ungodly men.

HIS innocency being sometimes overshadowed by thick and dark mists of slander, reproaches, and defamation, he endeavoured first to view the promises, and secondly to act faith on them.

The promises were these, Psal. xxxvii. v. 6, Matt. v. 10, 11, 12, 1 Pet. iii. 14, iv. 14, Psal. lxviii. 13.—"Though you have lain among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove, covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold;" that is, though you have been

as so many abjects, cast into the end of the earth, as thrown away among the black and smoky pots, oppressed with mighty reproaches, yet the time is at hand, that ye shall be as doves; your innocency and happiness shall appear; you shall come to the highest felicity, and ye shall be freed from slander, and obtain illustrious glory.

In acting faith he endeavoured to meditate and to pray. His meditations were those:

We know not how to prevent it. Men may slander, as long as there are wicked men on earth or malice in hell. Only we have these promises for comforts, and it is the Lord who promiseth, to hide us from the scourge of tongues, or if he please he is able to restore us double for our shame.

True faith will fortify the soul against all reproaches; there is an encouraging scripture to this end. "Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law, fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings." That if the wicked reproach more and more, yet it is the duty of experienced Christians to exercise patience.

A knowledge of their vanity, and God's gracious dealings with us, will fortify our hearts. "Fear not, thou worm, (thou poor despicable thing,) I will help thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer." And as for thy reproachers, their doom is, "Behold, all they who are incensed against thee shall be ashamed and confounded; they shall be as nothing, and they that strive against thee shall perish."

Faith makes the soul circumspect, and in this case doth search diligently to find out the causes of reproaches, &c. we receive information from Pet. iii. 14. "If ye suffer for righteousness sake, happy are ye." It must be for righteousness sake, or there is no blessing upon it, and the apostle adds, you must have a good conscience, that whereas they speak evil of you as evil-doers, they may be ashamed, who falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ; for it is better if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing than for evil doing.

We are ordinarily more impatient at undeserved sufferings than at deserved sufferings; but it is better to suffer innocently than otherwise. Therefore let him that

suffereth as an experienced Christian, be not ashamed, but let him glorify God on this account.

True faith esteems all slander for religion the most honourable badges of innocency that can possibly be. If," said Job, xxxi. 35, 36, " mine adversary should write a book against me, surely I would take it upon my shoulder, and bind it as a crown to me." " I rejoice," said Luther, " that Satan so rages and blasphemes, it is likely that I do him and his kingdom the more mischief." " They who reproach me," said one of the fathers in the church, " do against their will increase mine honour both with God and good men."

" The more the dirty feet of men, (said another,) tread on and rub the figure graven in gold, the more lustre they give it; so the more causeless aspersions the wicked cast on the experienced Christian, the more bright do they rub their glory. Hence that choice of Moses, rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season, esteeming the reproaches of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt.

The experienced Christian's prayer in time of reproaches. His complaint.—Thou, O Lord, hast known my reproach and my shame, and my dishonour, mine adversaries are all before thee, reproach hath broken my heart, and I am full of heaviness, and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none, and for comforters, but I found none.

His petition to the Lord.—Let me not be ashsmed, O Lord, for I have called upon thee; let the wicked be ashamed, let them be silent; let the lying lips be put to silence, which speak grievous things proudly and contemptuously against the righteous. O how great is thy goodness which thou hast laid up for them that trust in thee before the sons of men! Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence, from the pride of men, thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues.

Thus Lord, I beg at thy hands, or if otherwise thou knowest in thy wisdom, let them alone, and let them curse, it may be the Lord will look on my affliction, and thou, Lord, wilt requite good for their cursing this day.

His pressing his soul with the gracious promises, such as, "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my name's sake, and if ye suffer for righteousness sake, happy are ye," &c. These are the golden promises; now, Lord, make them good to my soul: let me draw the juice, sweetness, and virtue from each of these; let not a word of these promises fall to the ground; but let me have my part, and share, and portion in them.

When he is thus exercised, his prayer also is, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." Here is much matter of comfort, that our hearts are well, and not ill affected to any man; and that going alone we can humble ourselves, and pray for the authors of all the reproaches and slander that are unjustly cast on us. Amen and Amen.

MOTIVES TO EVANGELICAL REPENTANCE.

1. SIN laid open before us, to the convicion of conscience, Acts ii. 37, 38.

2. A consideration of God's judgments, Rev. ii. 4, 5, 16.

3. A consideration of the Lord's chastisements and corrections, Lam. iii. 19, 20, Rev. iii. 19.

4. A fear that God will remove all means from us. Rev. ii. 5.

5. A consideration of the great day of judgment, Acts xvii, 30, 31.

6. A consideration of the mercy, and grace of God, Hosea vi. 1. Zech. 13.

7. A consideration of the patience, and goodness of God, Rom. ii. 4.

8. The approach of the kingdom of God; or the beauty of religion, Canticles ii. 10, 11, 12, 13, Matt. iii. 2, 4.

9. A consideration of the promises of forgiveness upon our repentance, Isai. lv. 6, 7, Acts iii. 19.

10. A consideration of the promises of life eternal on repentance, Ezek. xviii. 32, 38.

11. A consideration of the promises of communion, and fellowship with God, Isai. lvii. 15.

12. A consideration of Christ crucified for us, Zach. xii. 10, 11.

13. A consideration of God's former dealings with us in mercy, Hosea xii. 3, 4, 5, 6.

14. A hope and belief that God will accept us when we come to him through Christ, Jer. iii. 22.

15. The publication of Christ's marriage with poor souls, Luke xiv. 15, 16, 17, 18, &c.

16. A consideration of those comforts that await on evangelical repentance. Matt. v. 4, Luke xv. 7, 17, 18.

ANECDOTE.

A Gentleman in Fairfax county, in the state of Virginia, was a great opposer of religion, and in a merry way he used to make a mock and play church with his children, to grieve his pious consort, play hymn tunes on his fiddle, and affect duties, by way of ridicule. One day as he was riding the road alone, in a careless manner, singing, "Come to judgment, stand before the son of God," he seemed as if some one said, What is that? Say that over again. On that he applied it to himself, saying, "Must I, must I, come to judgment, and stand before the Son of God? Such a poor trifling being as I am?" Sorrow and fear seized his mind, his tears burst forth; he cried to God in disquietude of soul, and the long-suffering Lord heard him, and healed him! after which he performed duty with his pious wife and little children with reverence and godly fear.

SAW YE HIM WHOM MY SOUL LOVETH!
CANT. III. 3.

DEAREST JESUS, though unseen,
My believing heart doth love thee;
Poor despised Nazarene,
A true and constant friend I've prov'd thee.
Sinking in thy balmy name,
O how I love the bleeding Lamb!

Day and night I vent my sighs,
Languishing to see my Saviour:
With warm heart and lifted eyes,
I'd view my dying God for ever.
There I always would abide,
O may I nothing know beside.

Like some widow'd turtle dove,
I, lovely Lamb, mourn for thee.
Pants my soul, quite faint with love,
Crying, O my Lord, restore me,
To thy presenee, sweet and free,
O how I long to be with thee.

Every moment seems an age,
Till thy presence, Lord, restores me;
Till thy grace my woes asswage,
And thy absence no more grieve me.
Quickly, quickly, Jesus, come,
And make my heart thy constant home.

O'er the hill I see him come,
Quick as darts of piercing lightning,
Scatters all the horrid gloom,
All my powers are quick and bright'ning,
Welcome, welcome, bleeding Lamb!
O how thy presence feeds the flame!

Praise shall my glad tongue employ,
Praise shall all my powers enliven,
He's the centre of my joys,
Jesus, Prince of earth and heaven.
He is mine, and I am His;
Now He's my glory and my bliss.